

Low-Cost, High-Impact: Creating Curb Appeal

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Winchester, VA



FRAZIER ASSOCIATES
213 N. Augusta Street
Staunton, Virginia

What is Curb Appeal?



Creating a positive-first and lasting-impression

First Impression? Lasting Impression?



First Impression? Lasting Impression?





The Main Street Approach®

- COMMUNITY VISION
- MARKET UNDERSTANDING

TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

- QUANTITATIVE OUTCOMES
- QUALITATIVE OUTCOMES

DESIGN

ORGANIZATION

PROMOTION

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Transformational Strategies

New River Gorge Tool Kit



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INTRODUCTION

With grant money from The Benedum Foundation, the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority (NRGRDA) has devoted funds to create an educational community development toolkit to offer ideas and recommendations to communities for improving the visual perception and image of their area or create "curb appeal." Specifically this toolkit will address:

- Beautification
- Storefronts
- Signage

To assist with this project, NRGRDA has teamed with Anderson & Associates and Frazier Associates, an architecture and planning firm with experience in community revitalization.



Anderson & Associates, Inc.



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Project Area

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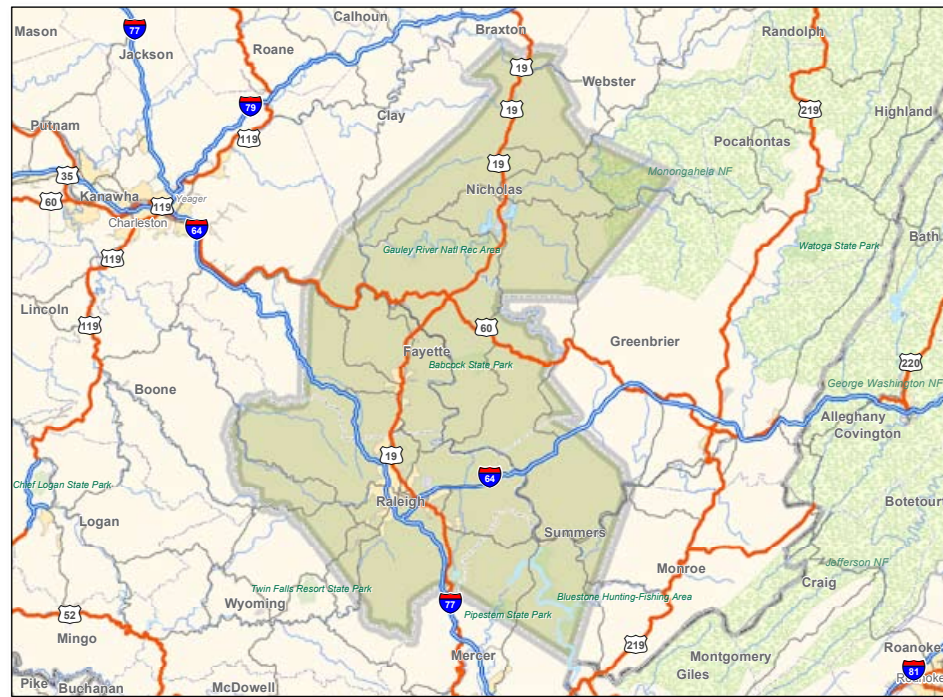
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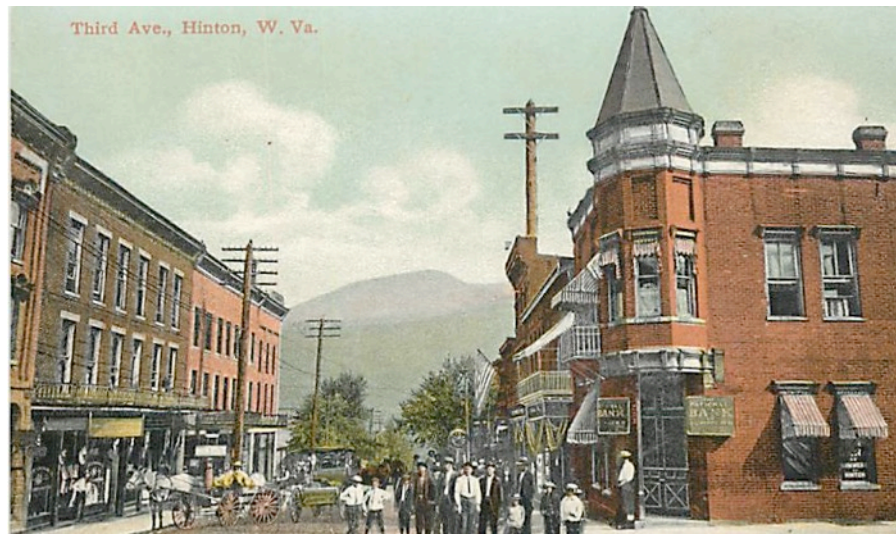
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1. Project Area

The target area for this project is the region covered by NRGRDA which includes all localities within Nicholas, Fayette, Raleigh, and Summers Counties (see map). Even though the examples are specific to this area, the recommendations are universal and can be used to enhance any community.





Historic Communities

- Beautification
- Storefronts
- Signs



Areas of Focus for Creating Curb Appeal

A. Beautification Projects

1. Gateways and Entrances
2. Screening and Creating Edges
3. Inviting Pedestrian Zones
4. Environmental Art
5. Maintenance



A.1. Gateways and Entrances

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1. Gateway & Entrances: Existing Conditions



Traveling north on U.S. Route 19 near the Mount Hope exit.



Traveling east on Route 612 near Mossy.



Traveling west on U.S. Route 60 entering Glen Ferris.



Traveling south on U.S. Route 16 to Sophia.

Entry Corridor – Suicide Lane



Winchester Solutions



Entry Corridor



Banners and Entry Signs



A.2 Screening and Creating Edges

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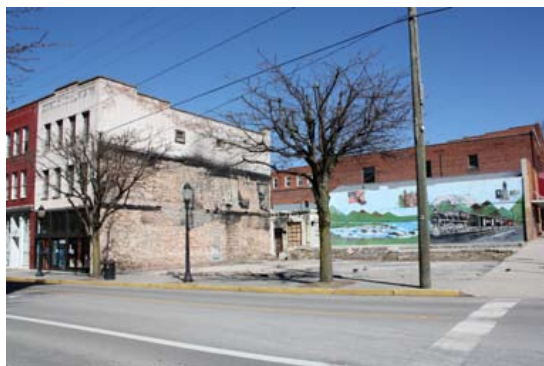
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2. Screening and Creating Edges: Existing Conditions



This empty lot in Hinton has already been enhanced with a mural but the appearance of the empty lot detracts from the mural.



This parking lot along a street coming into Beckley could be enhanced with a landscaped edge to make a more attractive entrance into town.



The entrance to Oak Hill includes a parking lot to the left that could be enhanced with landscaping to make a more attractive entrance to the downtown.

What Other Communities Have Done



Before



Photosimulation



A.3. - Inviting Pedestrian Zones

3. Inviting Pedestrian Zones

Shade and elements that are human-scaled create inviting pedestrian zones. Therefore, adding elements along Main Street such as outdoor dining and seating areas, planters, trees, awnings, flags, and banners beautify sidewalk areas and create inviting pedestrian zones.



Downtowns were historically thriving pedestrian-oriented places as this early view of Mount Hope clearly illustrates. Awnings were an important component for creating this inviting pedestrian zone.



A Range of Ideas

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3. Inviting Pedestrian Zones: What Other Communities Have Done



Outdoor seating and portable signs...



outdoor dining...



awnings and street trees...



along with colorful planters all help to create an inviting pedestrian zone.

Photosimulation Example



Business “Open” Banners



A.4. – Environmental Art

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4. Environmental Art: What Other Communities Have Done



In Abingdon, Virginia, the wolf is used as a way to celebrate the town's ties to Daniel Boone and early settlement.



Similarly, the turtle is important to Tybee Island, GA and decorated turtles adorn the town.



Several communities paint fire hydrants. On the left, famous local citizens were depicted while on the right is a fire hydrant located in front of a fire house.

Winchester

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4. Environmental Art: What Other Communities Have Done



This banner program in Winchester, Virginia features paintings by local artists. Every year, at the end of the summer; the banners are taken down, cleaned, and auctioned as a fundraising event. A new set of banners are made and installed the next season, continuing the local art celebration.

Seasonal Art

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4. Environmental Art: What Other Communities Have Done



In Martinsburg, West Virginia, Halloween is celebrated with a wide array of scarecrows attached to light poles in the downtown.

Murals – Opportunity to Create Scale and Place



One Idea...



A More Fanciful and Humorous Idea



Bringing Back Historic Interiors



History and Scale: Richmond

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5. Environmental Art: What Other Communities Have Done



Bringing Blocked Up Windows to Life



A.5 Maintaining Curb Appeal

5. Maintaining Curb Appeal

Maintenance of existing landscaping, planters, signs, and other elements is key to beautification projects. Before implementing any new projects, time spent on maintaining the existing projects can be an immediate priority. Maintenance should be a key consideration when planning any new projects.



Flower pots require frequent watering.



The Main Street Approach®

- COMMUNITY VISION
- MARKET UNDERSTANDING



- QUANTITATIVE OUTCOMES
- QUALITATIVE OUTCOMES

Transformational Strategies

A. Beautification

B. Storefronts

C. Signs



Areas of Focus for Creating Curb Appeal

B. Storefront Projects

1. General Maintenance
2. Inviting Entrances
3. Overall Façade Improvements
4. Material Conservation and Repair



B.1. General Maintenance

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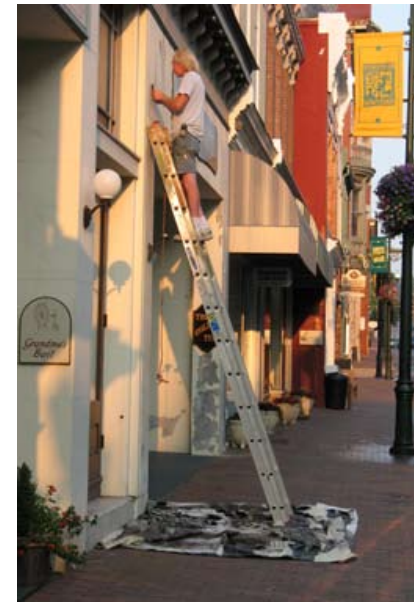
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1. General Maintenance: Some Easy Things To Do



Washing windows and awnings on a regular basis and touching up paint are simple maintenance steps that go a long way toward presenting attractive storefront areas.

B.1. General Maintenance



B.2. Inviting Entrances

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2. Inviting Store Entrances: What Other Communities Have Done



Flower boxes and planters at storefronts are one of the simplest and most effective ways to enhance the pedestrian zone as seen in these examples.



Coordinating the color of the flowers with paint colors makes a very strong impression.

B.2. Inviting Entrances

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2. Inviting Store Entrance: Some Ideas for New River Gorge



In the photosimulation above, this store entrance is made more inviting with a new awning and planters.

B.3. Overall Façade Improvements

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3. Overall Exterior Building Improvements: What Other Communities Have Done



Another example of simple facade improvements includes removing plywood from the windows and storefront, repair, and painting. New doors were added in the storefront and to the second floor. This building went from blighted to available for tenants.

B.3. Overall Façade Improvements

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3. Overall Exterior Building Improvements: What Other Communities Have Done



A simple paint scheme for the rear entrance to this building creates a much more inviting entrance to the businesses in this multi-tenant building.



Existing Rear Façade



Potential Rear Façade Improvements





The Main Street Approach®

- COMMUNITY VISION
- MARKET UNDERSTANDING



- QUANTITATIVE OUTCOMES
- QUALITATIVE OUTCOMES

Transformational Strategies

- Beautification
- Storefronts
- Signs



Areas of Focus for Creating Curb Appeal

C. Sign Projects

1. Maintenance
2. Corridor Signs
3. Downtown Signs



C.1 Maintenance

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Existing Conditions in Downtown



Poorly maintained and abandoned signs, and signs for closed businesses, convey a negative impression of the region and the historic downtown areas.



C.1 Maintenance – Entry Corridors

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C.1 Maintenance – Entry Corridors

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2. Corridor Signs: Some Ideas for New River Gorge



The same sign shown earlier could be further enhanced with a landscape island at the base of the sign. This not only enhances the sign but also the entrance to the business.

C.1 Maintenance - Downtown

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C.2 Corridor Signs

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2. Corridor Signs: What Other Communities Have Done



This view of Route 60 heading into Lexington, Virginia was taken in the mid-1990s. Note that most of the businesses have tall pole signs.

C.2 Corridor Signs

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2. Corridor Signs: What Other Communities Have Done



This is the same view of Lexington taken about ten years later. The City conducted an experiment where temporary monument-style signs were installed in front of businesses and were tested for how effective they were. The businesses overwhelmingly decided to change their signs from pole-mounted to ground-mounted monument signs. The City provided financial assistance for sign bases and landscaping and the businesses paid for sign faces.

C.3 Downtown Signs

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3. Downtown Signs

Because signs in downtown areas are generally viewed by the pedestrian as they walk the streets, these signs can be smaller while having more complex and interesting design features. That said, these signs need to be able to be seen from a moving vehicle, and by pedestrians as they walk down either side of the street.



These projecting signs - "Fudge," "Deli," and "Art" are small, attractive, and easily read by the pedestrian.

C.3 Downtown Signs

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C.3 Downtown Signs

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3. Downtown Signs: Some Ideas For New River Gorge



By placing a new sign on the building, the coffee shop is better identified. A smaller monument sign identifies the other businesses located at the back of the building. Landscaping and additional flower pots further enhance the business and the downtown in general.

Next Steps

- Take a Hike with your Design Committee with:
 - Cameras,
 - Pads of paper,
 - Maps
- Drive corridors; walk downtown
- Record what you see...

Rate What You See

- 0 - Good Condition, nothing needed
- 1 - Minor improvements needed
- 2 - Moderate Improvements needed
- 3 - Major improvements needed

Findings

- 0 - Good Condition, nothing needed
- 1 - Minor improvements needed
- 2 - Moderate Improvements needed
- 3 - Major improvements needed

Generally speaking, Curb Appeal items fall into Category 1

What you might see...



What you might see...



What you might see...



What you might see...



What you might see...



Now What?

- Gather assessments and pictures
- Determine the biggest curb appeal issues in your community, best ways to address them, prioritize, make a work plan...
- Explore small incentive grants for small projects;
- Meet with Public Works to review potential public spruce up projects; learn what their maintenance schedule is;
- Create a deadline and have a party!

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